

- Braidotti, R. (1994). *Nomadic subjects*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Davies, B. (1990). The problem of desire. *Social Problems*, 37(4), 501-516.
- Forbes, C. (2001, June 16-17). Return to Rocky. *The Weekend Australian*, p. 7.
- Gatens, M. (1998). Institutions, embodiment and sexual difference. In M. Gatens & A. Mackinnon (Eds.), *Gender and Institutions Welfare, work and citizenship* (pp. 1-15). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kenway, J., Willis, S., Blackmore, J., & Rennie, L. (1993). Learning from girls: What can girls teach feminist teachers? *Melbourne Studies in Education*, 29(1), 63-77.
- Kenway, J., Willis, S., Blackmore, J., & Rennie, L. (1997). *Answering back: Girls, boys and feminism in schools*. St Leonards NSW: Allen and Unwin.
- Lindsey, L. (1994). *Gender roles: a sociological perspective* (2nd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Lupton, G., Short, P., & Whip, R. (Eds.). (1992). *Society and gender an introduction to sociology*. Melbourne: Macmillan Education Australia.
- McDowell, L. (1999). *Gender, identity and place: Understanding feminist geographies*. Sydney, NSW: Polity Press.
- Moore, T. (2003). *The gap between hope and happening: Feminist consciousness meets phallogocentric smog in a regional Australian university*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Faculty of Education and Creative Arts, Central Queensland University.
- Probert, B. (2002). 'Grateful slaves' or 'self-made women': a matter of choice or policy. *Australian Feminist Studies*, 17(37), 7-17.
- Rowan, L. (1998). Cabbages grow on the tundra yet the moose feeds by night: Feminism, universities and other cultural mysteries. In L. Rowan & M. Brennan (Eds.), *Cultural Transformation: essays in culture and change* (pp. 13-25). Rockhampton: CQU Press.
- State of the State. (2003, Feb 11). *The Courier Mail*, p. 5.
- Suchman, L. A. (1987). *Plans and Situated Actions: the problematic of human/machine communication*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Weedon, C. (1987). *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.

PORTFOLIO CAREERS AND LIFELONG LEARNING: WHO TAKES RESPONSIBILITY?

Teresa Moore
Central Queensland University

ABSTRACT

In this paper I explore the notion of *portfolio* careers for women. Globalization and economic rationalism draw attention to the changing nature of the workplace where these ideologies are shaping the performances of workers. When this context is coupled with discourses around lifelong learning, some significant questions are raised such as who takes responsibility for ensuring that workers involve themselves in lifelong learning, who gains from the promotion of lifelong learning, and what can be called legitimate lifelong learning within a portfolio career.

INTRODUCTION

There has been much discussion and debate over the past thirty years concerning women and their entry to the workplace. In this paper I continue this discussion by exploring three key themes that draw attention to issues pertaining to the positioning of women in contemporary workplaces, the ongoing debate about childcare and parenting responsibility, and discourses around lifelong learning. The first theme centres around the notion of *portfolio* careers, once the domain of successful, high-flying male executives and now the domain of part-time and casual workers. The second theme highlights the changing nature of the contemporary workplace

that is under the influence of globalization and economic-rationalist policies. The third and final theme of this paper draws the first and second theme together to interrogate the discourse of lifelong learning and how this intersects with women workers in the contemporary workplace.

THE PORTFOLIO CAREER

The notion of a portfolio career is not new or particularly novel. Many middle-aged executive men have been involved in such careers for years (Waite, 2002). However, this concept has also become an attractive option for some women. Waite (2002, p. 92) uses the well-known corporate identity, Margaret Jackson,

now chair of Qantas, as an example of a woman who has opted for a portfolio career. She has declined traditional partnerships for a series of board appointments and consultancy work. On the one hand Margaret Jackson appears to be following on the male pathway of corporate executives, but Waite also raises the point that portfolio careers can be happening without the worker realising. What is meant here is that many of us combine job juggling with study, part-time work with childcare and family responsibilities, and sport, entertainment, and leisure activities. In other words, for many women and men, life is a portfolio career.

Waite (2002, p. 92) defines a portfolio career as a combined life and work package where women are now rejecting the norm of nine-to-five work patterns and opting for a combination of paid and unpaid work. The idea of a portfolio career is not necessarily new, as women have been doing this kind of job juggling for years. However, the term portfolio career is gaining legitimacy as many professional men are either combining a series of positions within a portfolio or working more than one job at any one time as a “work package” (Waite, 2002). Traditionally, this portfolio work pattern was an exclusive male domain where certain privileged men were granted, as a sign of their merit, worth, and status, positions of power in the corporate world. These men could be described as “pillars of patriarchal society” who had reached this level of “expertise” through years of work within possibly the same company, or who were connected through that “old boys” network from school and university days. These men often had privileged education and family status and, as wealthy patriarchs, could only be challenged by the entrepreneur, who gained a similar position by creating wealth through innovative or creative businesses. These men stalked the corridors of power knowing that women were less likely to be found in this arena. In other words patriarchal systems work to maintain a sexual division of labour.

This sexual division of labour also serves to reinforce the division between the public and private realm. As Spivak (1990, p. 377) explains, the political, social, professional, economic, and intellectual belong to the public; while the emotional, sexual, and domestic are part of the private. These binaries have consequently associated men with the public realm and women with the private realm where a sexual division of labour has then neatly

allocated particular jobs on a biologically determinist argument. Challenging this biological determinist argument, Butler (1990) declares that it is through repetitive gendered performances by specific bodies, that have been labelled male or female, that this allocated sexual division of labour has come to be seen as “natural” and “normal”. However, the consequences of this division have meant that in contemporary times child rearing and domestic responsibilities have remained both an expectation and a reality for Australian women (Wearing, 1996, p. 143). This expectation and reality stems from a traditional norm within Australian society of the nuclear, patriarchal family where the men go to paid employment outside the home and women do unpaid work within the home. Gatens (1998, p. 9) points out that the hours that women devote to household labour and childcare are hours that are not available to paid work, unlike men, who gain these hours when they leave housework and childcare to partners. This becomes a significant point when considered in relation to women’s participation in the workplace.

Women are entering the workplace for diverse reasons, they include but are not restricted to the following:

- the need to supplement the household income,
- they may be the sole breadwinner for that household unit,
- many women desire to continue their careers.

I would also like to suggest another reason why women want to enter the workplace: to create time for themselves (a theme I will raise again in a later section). Women’s entry to the public space of society is happening in a complex, dynamic, and changing workplace context and it is influenced by processes of globalization and policies of economic rationalism.

THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE WORKPLACE

The second theme of this paper concerns the changing nature of the contemporary workplace. This theme draws attention to the diverse range of work patterns within an equally diverse range of workplaces. The workplace is an arena of contesting, ambiguous, and competing discourses that shape the performances of those working within it, as well as impacting on the way those same workers negotiate the

circulating discourses. In Australia, as a consequence of second-wave feminism and women's activism during the 1960s and 1970s, women have been entering the public sphere and the labour market in increased numbers (Probert & Wilson, 1993; Zajdow, 1995). Perhaps as a consequence of globalization, women are now seen as vital to the labour market, thereby moving towards a feminisation of the labour market.

While the traditional full-time job is still present, these jobs are more likely to be held by males and those women who either do not have children or who are in a position to get full-time childcare. However, this so-called feminisation of the labour market is more likely to see women concentrated in particular occupations – and more specifically, in part-time work away from the core of valued workers. This is highlighted through a common status within the peripheral labour market where many women are employed on the basis of short-term contracts, consultancies, and casual and on-call arrangements. Beechey (1987) suggests that married women have functioned as a disposable labour force that disappears and re-appears when services are demanded, supporting the notion of the “reserve army” of workers. Not only have women always been cheaper to employ but they have been prepared to work in both part-time and casual jobs to gain some flexibility in the hours worked. The availability of childcare, and family responsibilities, still remain as important considerations for employed women in the new work era. For many women then, part-time and casual work has enabled them to combine work with family responsibilities.

Currently I would argue that, while this reserve army is still present, it is not just married women making up its ranks. Not only is the composition changing to include married and single women, but men also, are part of this reserve army. In fact, this army is becoming the norm within the processes of globalization that are now shaping the notion of work generally and women's work specifically. In an era of economic rationalism where the bottom line is cost cutting, many employers have opted for a “more flexible breed of employee” (Balogh, 2003, p. 13). Balogh (2003) suggests that there are five new employment relationships:

- fixed-term contracts – where there are the same benefits and entitlements as full-time employment, but lack security;

- casuals – where there are more flexible hours and an increased loading in lieu of benefits such as sick leave and holidays;
- part time – where if permanent enjoy entitlements but fewer hours, popular with those wanting to combine work and family;
- contractors – where workers are not bound by any minimum pay, superannuation, other entitlements or unfair dismissal;
- labour hire – where these are just casual, daily sign on arrangements (p. 13).

According to Thomas (1999), 80 percent of the jobs created in Queensland since 1989 have either been casual or part time, with one in three jobs now casual and heavily concentrated among women workers. This casualisation of the workplace has often been promoted under the guise of “flexible” and “friendly” working conditions for mothers, but in reality there is often little choice of when these hours are worked. A recent study by Probert (2002) suggests that few women actually earn enough to be independent, and the new Fordist economy is characterised by growing sectors of feminised employment; examples being the retail and hospitality industries which pay barely a living wage. Manufacturing and telecommunication industries use female outworkers as “working fodder” with Milliner (1998) pointing out that for some companies, flexible working hours mean they can call on workers to come and go as the demand requires; that is, for example, four hours today and maybe two hours tomorrow.

This highlights the changing nature of work from that of a production regime to one that better suits service industries, an area increasingly made up of women workers. This sector ranges from the delivery of education (teachers) to the commodification of care (nurses, childcare workers, beauty therapists, psychologists). Women are also entering non-traditional jobs as, for example, engineers, academics, medical specialists, and accountants, just to name just a few. While on the surface this change appears to be moving towards a transformation of the workplace, Australia reflects traditional trends present in other OECD (Organization of Economic and Cooperative Development) countries in terms of work/gender segregation. Australia has the highest number of occupations and industries segregated by sex, with male workers having a much greater choice than women (Zajdow, 1995, p. 3). For those

women returning to the workplace after the birth of their children or when their children have started school, there are extra pressures within a context of lifelong learning. Complicating this changing workplace are the discourses associated with lifelong learning.

LIFELONG LEARNING AND THE WORKPLACE

Axford and Moyes (2003) state that lifelong learning is a “catch all” term used by politicians and policy makers to combine the diverse range of education and training issues that have emerged with concurrent technological and economic changes happening within a context of globalization. Lifelong learning has therefore become a concept synonymous with ongoing education, training, information management, information communication, and globalized workplaces. To be on the cutting edge in the new workplace is to be involved with technology and this is intimately connected to the “need” for lifelong learning (Albon & Trinidad, 2002). As Jarvis (2000) points out, lifelong learning is intimately linked to global capitalism which may enhance the lives of some workers but denies opportunities for other workers who do not have appropriate training. Consequently, the individual who, by definition of being a worker in this current era, needs to be constantly updating skills and knowledge to remain a valued and flexible member of the labour market. A dominant discourse in the labour market promotes flexibility, creativity, and innovation. These qualities, along with communication skills, are key attributes that most employers require; one just needs to read the job-vacancy sections of the major Australian newspapers to confirm this view. The question then becomes – what does that actually mean – and whose responsibility is it to maintain lifelong learning?

Axford and Moyes (2003) consider that lifelong learning has a particularly close resonance with current debates regarding the needs of both workers and organizations that form the globalized market place. There is a strong discourse that ties continual upgrading of skills to economic success. In other words, to be seen as economically successful, staff are required to be “on the cutting edge” of their occupation or profession. According to Axford and Moyes (2003) this means that educational and training outcomes are being directly linked to job placement and human-resource planning. For

Jarvis (2000) this kind of link brings an ethical dimension to lifelong learning. The link implies that in order to get a job in a specific place a corresponding “certificate” from a recognised training institution is required (see also Reid-Searl & Anastasi, 2002). When these kinds of links are made, it could be argued that responsibility for upgrading or even obtaining a recognised piece of paper noting particular skills and attributes lies with the worker. This also generates niche marketing within training institutions for short courses that, in turn, shifts the cost of training from a workplace onto the potential employee, and thus fitting neatly into a user-pays ideology (Reid-Searl & Anastasi, 2002).

Whilst generating new training courses would, in turn, establish further employment for trainers, I suggest that this could homogenise workers’ attributes, masking instead of celebrating differences among employees. When one considers that the pressure to embrace this notion of lifelong learning occurs within a highly gendered workplace, the increasing priority given to “recognised qualifications” has significant consequences for those women desiring part-time employment. Probert (2002) contends that while women are encouraged to enter the workplace, discourses around domesticity and motherhood remain relatively traditional. There is an expectation of the second wage, but childcare and housework still fall primarily to women (Lupton, Short, & Whip, 1992). As a result, there are competing discourses of motherhood and caring (traditional) and women and working (challenging traditional discourses) present, where these discourses are more likely to be negotiated by women in the private sphere (Lafferty & Fleming, 2000).

In other words, the hours and conditions under which many women work are determined by their private responsibilities as much as by their public desires. As stated earlier, reasons for some women returning to employment may be to supplement household income, a desire to maintain a career, or to gain some time for themselves – by this I suggest that some women work to regain an identity separate from that of being a mother. I would argue that working women who are married and who have children are thought of as wives or mothers first rather than individuals with their own personalities, multiple subjectivities, and identities. Being part of the workplace gives these women an identity

that is not tied to being an object, that is, someone's wife or someone's mother. Returning to the workplace enables women to incorporate skills developed in the private sphere with those gained from formal training. Feminist activism in the 1970s and 1980s drew attention to the concept of "merit" where skills and attributes could be equated to "experience".

The concept of merit is a slippery notion where there is potential for further gender discrimination (Blackmore, 1999). As merit is a constructed term, the criteria used, rather than the concept itself, needs to be kept in check. For those women who opt for part-time work to combine their public and private spheres of life, the notion of merit could be extended to include (and value) those attributes finely tuned by running household budgets, organizing timetables and activities with school demands and children, negotiating and allocating tasks inside and outside the house, and keeping to deadlines in order to feed the family at meal times; thus demonstrating the ways in which the contemporary woman worker/mother/wife is firmly entrenched in a portfolio career. Because these attributes are still seen as an extension of women's biology and do not come with a recognised "workplace certificate" (marriage certificates do not count), many women may lose out before the interview phase because they do not meet the selection criteria. These same women may not be in a position to gain further qualifications in a context that sees lifelong learning as a personal investment and therefore the responsibility of the individual not an organization or workplace. Workers no longer have the same job for life and face retraining and career changes as the norm, with the onus on the individual to value add to their portfolio career.

CONCLUSION

When portfolio careers are coupled with changing patterns of employment from full-time to part-time and casual hours, opportunities to transform the workplace emerge. There is the possibility whereby both men and women can gain from a redistribution of working hours and parental responsibility. The notion of running concurrent, negotiated, and valued portfolios between parents and those workers who wish to reduce their stress levels, workloads and hours of work could be appealing, but only if accompanied by suitable wages. The changing nature of the workplace provides a new context

within which to negotiate and revalue skills and attributes that can cross the public/private divide. This has resulted in the responsibility for lifelong learning moving to the individual as a personal investment in their portfolio career. It also allows for the valuing and extension of lifelong learning that is "other" to formal training and qualifications.

REFERENCES

- Albon, R., & Trinidad, S. (2002). Building learning communities through technology. In K. Appleton, C. Macpherson, & D. Orr (Eds.), *Building learning communities through education: refereed papers from the 2nd International Lifelong Learning Conference* (pp. 50-56), Yeppoon, Queensland, Australia, 16-19 June. Rockhampton: Central Queensland University.
- Axford, B., & Moyes, T. (2003). *Lifelong learning: An annotated bibliography* (No. 03/15). Canberra: University of Canberra.
- Balogh, S. (2003, June 11). Welcome to the revolution. *The Australian*, p. 13.
- Beechey, V. (1987). *Unequal work*. London: Verso.
- Blackmore, J. (1999). *Troubling women feminism leadership and educational change*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble feminism and the subversion of identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Gatens, M. (1998). Institutions, embodiment and sexual difference. In A. Mackinnon (Ed.), *Gender and Institutions Welfare, work and citizenship* (pp. 1-15). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jarvis, P. (2000). "Imprisoned in the global classroom" – revisited: towards an ethical analysis of lifelong learning. In K. Appleton, C. MacPherson, & D. Orr (Eds.), *Lifelong Learning Conference: Selected papers from the inaugural international Lifelong Learning Conference* (pp. 20-27), July 17-19, Yeppoon Queensland, Australia. Rockhampton: Lifelong Learning Conference Committee, Central Queensland University.
- Lafferty, G., & Fleming, J. (2000). The re-structuring of academic work in Australia: power, management and gender. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 21(2), 257-267.
- Lupton, G., Short, P., & Whip, R. (Eds.). (1992). *Society and gender an introduction to sociology*. Melbourne: Macmillan Education Australia.
- Milliner, K. (1998, June 30). Right of passage. *Courier Mail*, p. 13.
- Probert, B. (2002). 'Grateful slaves' or 'self-made women': a matter of choice or policy. *Australian Feminist Studies*, 17(37), 7-17.

Probert, B., & Wilson, B. (Eds.). (1993). *Pink collar blues: Work gender and technology*. Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press.

Reid-Searl, K., & Anastasi, J. (2002). An assessment process with a difference – an avenue for nurses to regain their registration. In K. Appleton, C. Macpherson, & D. Orr (Eds.), *Building learning communities through education: refereed papers from the 2nd International Lifelong Learning Conference* (pp. 288-293), Yeppoon, Queensland, Australia, 16-19 June. Rockhampton: Central Queensland University.

Spivak, G. C. (1990). Explanantion and Culture: marginalia. In C. West (Ed.), *Out there: Marginalisation*

and *Contemporary Cultures* (Vol. 4). New York: MIT Press.

Thomas, S. (1999, May 14th). Social crisis looms as full-time work dries up. *Courier Mail*, p. 1.

Waite, N. (2002). Fine balance: Family, consultancy, a seat on the board and time to play tennis. By going 'portfolio' perhaps it is possible to have it all. *VIVE*, 92-94.

Wearing, B. (1996). *Gender: the pain and pleasure of difference*. Melbourne: Longman.

Zajdow, G. (1995). *Women and work: Current issues and debates*. Geelong: Deakin University Press.

SOCIAL CAPITAL, LIFELONG LEARNING, AND AUSTRALIAN OCCUPATIONAL TRAVELLERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL, RURAL, AND REMOTE EDUCATION

Beverley Moriarty, Geoff Danaher, and P. A. Danaher
Central Queensland University

ABSTRACT

This paper examines lifelong learning according to alternative understandings of capital. The authors argue that a more nuanced and contingent conception of capital is needed to understand the lifelong learning of Australian occupational Travellers. The paper considers implications of this argument for lifelong learning in regional, rural, and remote locations.

INTRODUCTION

An enduring debate about lifelong learning is its role in replicating existing social structures vis-à-vis its potential for creating new networks and relations. This debate is particularly important in regional, rural, and remote communities, which are often depicted as being under threat of diminution if not extinction.

This paper examines the conceptual links between lifelong learning and alternative understandings of capital. On the one hand, it considers Bourdieu's (1977, 1990, 1993) analysis of different forms of capital and its implications for education as an agent of socio-economic stratification. On the other hand, it presents the position that such an analysis does not provide a complete view of social capital conceived as regional, rural, and remote community development in Australia.

We contend that understanding the role and potential of lifelong learning in contemporary regional, rural, and remote education – particularly in an Australian rather than a European context – requires a more nuanced and

contingent conception of capital than that provided by Bourdieu, the significance of his contribution notwithstanding. We illustrate this conceptual argument by reference to the educational aspirations and opportunities of Australian occupational Travellers – specifically mobile circus and show communities. We assert that the forms of educational provision – including lifelong learning – for these communities need to engage with the Travellers' generation and exchange of varied forms of differently valued capital.

More broadly, we argue, the paper has important implications for lifelong learning in regional, rural, and remote locations. In particular, Australian occupational Travellers have three key characteristics in common with residents of such communities that suggest that responsibility for, and contributions to, lifelong learning in regional areas require dynamic and reciprocal social networks and partnerships.

It is important to explicate this paper's articulation with, yet also to differentiate it from, the three preceding papers about Australian occupational Travellers in the lifelong learning